

How Is Wood Measured and Sold?

Firewood is typically measured by the cord, which is simply a stack of wood 4 feet high by 4 feet wide by 8 feet long. A cord of firewood contains 128 cubic feet of volume, of which 80 - 90 cubic feet is solid wood (the remainder is mostly air space).

Determine the species mix of firewood to ensure appropriate pricing. A cord of hardwood is usually more expensive than that of softwood.

Determine if the firewood is dry or if it is still green. Dry wood is more expensive but burns more efficiently than green wood. Buy green this year for use the next heating season.

Other terms such as “face” cord or a “fitted” cord are used to indicate if the wood has been cut into pieces shorter than 4 feet. A face cord is a stack of wood 4 feet high, 8 feet long and some variable length in depth. (For example, 24 inch pieces will equal 0.5 cord whereas, 16 inch pieces will equal 0.33 cord).

Determine if the wood is split or not. Splitting helps to maintain regular burning conditions and speeds up the drying process.



Seasoning Wood

Cut and split your wood. Seasoning usually requires several months to at least a year for dense hardwoods. Dry wood burns longer, cleaner, and produces greater heat.

The more wood surface exposed to air, the faster it dries. Stack the wood in loose piles off the ground. The best place is a windy storage area exposed to sunlight. Covered storage, open on the ends, helps prevent re-wetting from rain/snow.

Covering with clear plastic and venting with a fan will allow the wood to more quickly dry.



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